

Texas Department of Health Bureau of Emergency Management

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION POLICY

The Bureau of Emergency Management will offer reasonable and appropriate accommodations for the written component of the certification examination for those persons with documented disabilities. The following information addresses prospective student information, requesting an accommodation, establishing eligibility for an accommodation, the EMS law and record keeping.

A. Prospective Student Information

The Bureau of Emergency Management recommends that a course coordinator review the functional job description with every prospective student prior to his/her entering into the education program. The coordinator should understand the information in the EMS Education and Training Manual concerning students and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Prospective students need to understand the competencies and tasks that are required within the profession before entering a training program.

Students who have received an accommodation during the course need to fully understand that there is a separate process for requesting an accommodation for the state written certification exam. And further that the Bureau of Emergency Management will establish eligibility for an accommodation on a case by case basis. In other words, just because a student was allowed an accommodation during the course, this does not guarantee an accommodation for the state written certification exam. Documentation confirming and describing the disability must be submitted according to policy for consideration.

B. Requesting an Accommodation

Request for Accommodation forms and Certification Application forms are available from the EMS regional offices and the Bureau of Emergency Management. Both forms may be requested by a coordinator or by the candidate. The candidate who is requesting an accommodation must complete the request form. In addition, a statement on letterhead stationery from a professional must be attached. This statement must confirm and describe the disability for which the accommodation is required.

Applicants with disabilities are entitled to, and have the responsibility to meet, the same deadlines for application and submission of documentation established for preregistration of nondisabled individuals. The process involved in establishing eligibility will not impose discriminatory timelines for application on the individual with a disability.

C. Establishing Eligibility for an Accommodation

The Bureau of Emergency Management will offer reasonable accommodations for the written certification exam for those persons with documented disabilities.

Based upon an analysis of the functional job description and the written examination, it has been

determined that persons with learning disabilities manifested in the academic areas of reading decoding or reading comprehension may be eligible for special test accommodations. An accommodation which may be allowed on the written examination due to documented learning disabilities relating to reading decoding or reading comprehension, is extended time for completing the written examination given in the standard format. The standard extension that may be allowed is time-and-a-half.

Documentation of a specific disability which would negatively impact one's performance on the written examination must include a completed "Request for Disability Accommodation" form with signatures of the individual and the professional familiar with the disability; and a statement on letterhead stationery from the professional who is familiar with the individual's disability. This statement must confirm and describe the disability for which an accommodation is being requested.

The professional could be a physician, psychologist, rehabilitation counselor, or a disability service provider from the college if there was an accommodation in that most recent academic setting.

Requests for accommodations on the written examination will be reviewed on a case by case basis. If the appropriateness of the requested accommodation is in doubt, the Bureau will discuss options with the candidate and will consult with professionals knowledgeable about disability and functions of the profession. The recency of disability testing is not an issue in determining the need for accommodation. A permanent learning disability is a permanent disability.

D. Chapter 773 Health and Safety Code EMS Rule T.A.C. 157.41

Chapter 773 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 773.050(b)(2), mandates the Board of Health to establish minimum standards for rules for EMS personnel certification and performance. Provisions within EMS rules require a candidate to pass skills examinations such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation, as well as, achieve a passing grade on the written certification examination.

The word "written" was purposefully included by both the Texas EMS Advisory Council and the Board of Health to insure that certified individuals could read. The written portion of the EMS certification examination is designed, in part, to measure an examiner's ability to read and understand English. Being able to read is a skill that is justified as integral to the performance of the job.

E. Record Keeping

Diagnostic information related to an individual's disability is highly confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties. The accommodation file will be maintained separately from the application and test results files.



**Texas Department of Health
Bureau of Emergency Management**

**R E Q U E S T F O R
D I S A B I L I T Y A C C O M M O D A T I O N**

If you have a disability requiring appropriate accommodations in taking the state examination, be sure to complete and submit this form along with the application. In addition, please **ATTACH** a statement from a professional who is familiar with your disability on letterhead stationery. This statement must confirm and describe the disability for which you require accommodation. This information will not be filed with your application or test results and will be confidential.

1. Do you have any disability-related needs that we should be made aware of in order to provide reasonable accommodations for the examination? If the answer is yes, please specify.

Disability_____

2. Have you had testing accommodations in your recent academic setting? If you answer "yes", specify the type of accommodation. Have a professional familiar with your disability complete this information, if needed.

Disability

Type of Test Accommodation

Please sign and date the bottom of this form. Make sure the professional who helps you complete the form and the attached statement also signs and dates this form.

Signature(Applicant)

Date

Printed Name of Applicant

Signature(Professional)

Date

Printed Name of Professional